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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC
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INFO CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 003089

SIPDIS

NOFORN
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STATE FOR EAP/CM AND EAP/EP TWANG
STATE FOR G/AIAG JLANGE, HFOSTER, RFENDRICK
STATE FOR M/MED AND M/MEDEX PETER WOOD
HHS FOR OGHA - STEIGER, ELVANDER, BHAT
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC
STATE PLEASE PASS TO USDA FOR DU/US LAMBERT
BEIJING FOR DSELIGSOHN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2031

TAGS: AMED ECON PREL TBIO EAGR CVIS HK CH
SUBJECT: CE TSANG HOSTS SMALL GATHERING TO SEEK SUPPORT
FOR MARGARET CHAN'S WHO CANDIDACY

REF: HONG KONG 3063

CLASSIFIED BY: ACTING CONSUL GENERAL MARLENE SAKAUE;
REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (C) LATE ON JULY 27, WE RECEIVED CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CE) DONALD TSANG,S INVITATION TO A FORTY-FIVE MINUTE RECEPTION ON JULY 31 AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE. THE PURPOSE WAS TO INTRODUCE DR. MARGARET CHAN, CHINA,S CANDIDATE FOR DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), AND SEEK CAPITALS, SUPPORT. A DOZEN REPRESENTATIVES -- CONSULAR OFFICIALS FROM INTER ALIA JAPAN, MEXICO, TURKEY, BRAZIL, DENMARK, PORTUGAL, AND KUWAIT, AS WELL AS A FEW HONORARY CONSULS (TONGA AND SRI LANKA) -- ATTENDED. SEVERAL SENIOR HKG OFFICIALS, INCLUDING SECRETARY FOR HEALTH, WELFARE AND FOOD (HWF) YORK CHOW, HWF

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PERMANENT SECRETARY SANDRA LEE, DIRECTOR OF THE CE,S OFFICE JOHN TSANG, AND DIRECTOR OF HEALTH PING-YAN LAM ACCOMPANIED CE TSANG AND DR. CHAN. PRC MFA COMMISSIONER LU TOOK PART, BUT DID NOT HAVE A SPEAKING ROLE.

¶2. (C) CE TSANG EXPRESSED HIS ADMINISTRATION,S FULL SUPPORT FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT,S DECISION TO NOMINATE CHAN AND SAID THE HKG WOULD ACTIVELY PROMOTE HER CANDIDACY. TSANG HIGHLIGHTED CHAN,S EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE GAINED AS A HKG CIVIL SERVANT AND AT WHO, AND POINTED TO HER TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP. SPECIFICALLY, HER MANAGEMENT OF SARS IN HONG KONG,S DENSE URBAN ENVIRONMENT WOULD PROVE VALUABLE IN DEALING WITH ANY PANDEMIC THAT MIGHT ARISE. NOTING THAT SOME OF THE COUNTRIES PRESENT WERE PUTTING FORWARD THEIR OWN CANDIDATES, TSANG HOPED THAT, WERE THEIR OWN CANDIDATES NOT TO MAKE THE SHORT LIST, THESE COUNTRIES WOULD GIVE FULL CONSIDERATION TO DR. CHAN,S CREDENTIALS AND CANDIDACY.

¶3. (C) DR. CHAN EXPRESSED HER APPRECIATION FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT,S PLACEMENT OF TRUST IN HER AND STATED THAT THE WHO DIRECTOR GENERAL WOULD PLAY A KEY ROLE IN EFFORTS TO REDUCE POVERTY, PROMOTE HEALTH, AND PREVENT DISEASES AND SUFFERING, PARTICULARLY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SHE MENTIONED THAT SHE WOULD BE VISITING CAPITALS IN THE COMING TWO MONTHS AND LOOKED FORWARD TO MEETINGS WITH COUNTERPARTS.

¶4. (C) AFTER THE SHORT REMARKS, TSANG, CHAN, AND SENIOR HKG OFFICIALS SPOKE BRIEFLY WITH GUESTS. TSANG EXPRESSED TO THE ACG HIS HOPE THAT DR. CHAN WOULD WIN USG SUPPORT. NOTING HER TRAVELS WITH SECRETARY LEAVITT AND U/S DOBRIANSKY, CHAN MODESTLY HOPED THEY WERE AWARE OF HER "SMALL" CONTRIBUTIONS TO AVIAN INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS. OTHER SENIOR HKG OFFICIALS HIGHLIGHTED HONG KONG,S RELATIONSHIPS WITH USG ENTITIES SUCH AS CDC, ADDING THAT CHAN,S CANDIDACY WOULD COMPLEMENT HONG KONG,S ONGOING EFFORTS TO EXPAND COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

SAKAUE